



WSIRN Episode 195: Wanted: book enthusiast at large
Hosted by Anne Bogel, with guest Mary Laura Philpot

[00:00:00]

MARY LAURA: I woke up this morning and I felt like it was Christmas. I was like, today is the day Anne tells me what I should read.

ANNE: I don't know what you should read. You work in a bookstore! [MARY LAURA LAUGHS]
Who am I to say?

[CHEERFUL INTRO MUSIC]

Hey, readers. I'm Anne Bogel, and this is What Should I Read Next? Episode 195.

Welcome to the show that's dedicated to answering the question that plagues every reader:
What should I read next?

We don't get bossy on this show: What we WILL do here is give you the information you need to choose your next read. Every week we'll talk all things books and reading and do a little literary matchmaking with one guest.

Readers, before we get started on today's episode I want to make sure you know that Volume II of One Great Book is complete. This is my short form podcast where each week I pull one stand-out selection off my personal bookshelves and tell you all about it in ten minutes or less. That means that, perhaps unlike What Should I Read Next, you can listen to the episode and come away with one new book for your TBR, instead of eleven. Some readers think that's a big perk.

If you haven't given it a try yet, this would be a great time to check it out. You can listen to the One Great Book episodes in any order you like, so start with last Friday's and then catch up on all the 15 books I've highlighted in volumes 1 and 2 before we begin our third volume in a few weeks.

Find One Great Book wherever you're listening to this podcast, at modernmrsdarcy.com/onegreatbook, that's O-N-E, One Great Book, or by clicking the link in today's show notes.

Today's guest Mary Laura Philpott is an essayist, bookseller, and a big fan of memoirs of people living "everyday lives". I'm sure many of you will be interested in her "everyday life" as a book enthusiast at large—yes, that is her actual job title—for Parnassus Books in Nashville.

We have a fun conversation about the reading and writing life, in which we work through her readerly guilt of hating beloved childhood classics, and we discuss explore book flights and reading symphonies.

It's always hard recommending books to a bookseller—because it seems they know about and have read nearly everything—but I do manage to find some good titles for Mary Laura's to-read pile. Though not, as you will hear, on the first try. Not even close really.

Let's get to it!

Mary Laura, welcome to the show.

[00:02:19]

MARY LAURA: Thank you for having me. This is fun.

ANNE: Oh, it is fun, and we've had a couple of near misses on getting to talk books in person.

MARY LAURA: I know.

ANNE: And today we're doing it, and I'm so glad.

MARY LAURA: I know. This-this has been a long time coming.

ANNE: Oh, there's so much we get to talk about today. So, you had a book ... You've had several books come out, but I feel like your last one was different.

MARY LAURA: Yeah, technically it's the second one. So, the first one was a book of cartoons. Very, very different from a memoir and essays, so this one, as my mother so charitably says, this is your first real book. [LAUGHS]

ANNE: [GASPS] No! Oh, Mary Laura's Mom. We love you, but ouch.

[00:02:57]

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] I get what she means. This is the first one with more than like five words on a page.

ANNE: Well, congratulations on that, and I'm sure we'll get to talk about that in the course of the episode. But also you are a bookseller at a bookstore that lots of readers have or want to visit.

MARY LAURA: Yes. Parnassus Books. It's fun to sit in the bookseller seat ... That part of the publishing and bookselling world and observe what people are into and kinda see the trends of what people like and what they come looking for.

ANNE: How long have you been doing that?

MARY LAURA: I have been there for five years now. Almost exactly.

ANNE: And what brought you to it?

MARY LAURA: Well people can kinda read about this in my book, *I Miss You When I Blink*, tells a little bit of the story of how I ended up in Nashville, but it was sorta serendipitous discovery. I was visiting Nashville, and I went into this store and met the people who worked there. And when I left Nashville, I wanted to stay in touch with the store because I enjoyed all the wonderful personalized recommendations. I was living in Atlanta at the time and in the part of the city where I lived, we didn't have an indie bookstore anymore. As I was leaving town, I said how can I follow you? You know, do you have a blog, do you have a store blog? Anything like that? And they said, no, but do you want to make us one because at the time, I was a book blogger for Barnes & Noble. So they actually hired me away and I started working for Parnassus long distance when I still lived in Atlanta, and then after about eight or nine months, I moved the whole family up here.

ANNE: You were a book blogger for Barnes & Noble? I did not know that.

MARY LAURA: Yes, back in the day.

ANNE: I was reading your book *I'll Miss You When I Blink* and I was reading the part about you moving from Atlanta to Nashville and how you just really needed to get out of Atlanta because it was the worst. Exactly the same moment that a dear friend of mine was moving to Atlanta, and I was like, I'm just not gonna tell her to read this. [LAUGHS] At least not right now.

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] You know, what I always tell people is, it's not about the place itself. When people are like, so are you saying what people should do is leave Atlanta and go to Nashville? And I always say no, leave your version of Atlanta if you are in a place that isn't right for you anymore and find your version of Nashville, which is a place that is right for you. Atlanta is a lovely city. It just wasn't the right place for me to be anymore.

[00:05:00]

ANNE: Well that's a very gracious way to put that and encouraging to all our southern strong ... We actually have a ton of readers in the Atlanta area.

MARY LAURA: I bet you do.

ANNE: So how long have you been working in books in some way shape or form?

MARY LAURA: I guess I was with Barnes & Noble just a year or two. And then before that, I was just you know, go back even just a few years in the blogosphere, and it was kinda the wild, wild west of people just having their own blogs and talking about books. And I was somebody who was always posting about what I was reading on whatever platform was the big thing at the time. So, you know, even before I was doing it professionally, I was reading constantly and trying to sorta do matchmaking among my friends and among people I knew on the Internet and help people find what they wanted to read.

ANNE: Were you one of those kids who just knew that you wanted to grow up and work in a bookstore someday?

MARY LAURA: You know, I probably should have been. [ANNE LAUGHS] It was so, like looking back, it's so obvious. Like if you dial back and just stop the timeline at any point in my childhood, you see me with a book. But it never occurred to me to work in a bookstore and it never even occurred to me to be a writer. Like in my mind, writers were either novelists or journalists, and I have never been somebody who writes fiction and journalism has always looked really, just really hard to me with all the research and fact checking. It did not look fun. And I just never assumed I would work in this world of books and writing, and you know, now I look back and it's like, well, duh, of course you are.

ANNE: When I was a kid, my most well developed adult fantasy life was me getting an apartment over a bookstore and having like my cup of coffee and books by night, and bookselling by day. And yet, I have never worked in a bookstore. I mean, I've been put to work in a bookstore [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] and really enjoyed the brief experience, but I have never drawn a paycheck from a bookstore.

MARY LAURA: But your bookstore-adjacent. You may not be working in a bookstore, and you may not be directly a bookseller, but you're very much a part of the ... Even really the bookselling world, you know, because you're out there doing that matchmaking. The matchmaking can happen all sorts of ways.

ANNE: We are booksellers here on What Should I Read Next 'cause we sell a lot of books. They just actually get rung up at Parnassus.

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] Exactly.

[00:07:07]

ANNE: So, Mary Laura, you write I'm pretty sure everywhere.

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] I write every day, and if you write every day, eventually your stuff does start to show up everywhere I guess. Essays are my thing, so I write essays all the time and whenever I can, I publish them somewhere.

ANNE: I know I've seen you in The New York Times and The Atlantic, and wait, have you been in The Atlantic?

MARY LAURA: No. I've never done The Atlantic. New York Times is where I've been published the most. I tend to publish there a couple times a year, and that's been sorta, a, you know, knock on wood kinda a long run. And I've done The Washington Post several times in different sections, and then really it's been kinda all over the place. I've published with The Paris Review. That was really fun because I really, really admire The Paris Review Daily, their online publication. And then once I was in Oprah's magazine. That was good fun. Yeah, kinda all over. Real Simple is probably my latest shiny magazine publication, and I got to work with Elizabeth Sile who is the books editor there and she is a delightful editor to work with.

ANNE: How long have you been essaying?

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] Essaying. I have been essaying-

ANNE: That means something else, doesn't it?

MARY LAURA: Well, it means trying. If you directly translate the word essay from the, you know, the French word, *essayer*, which means to try, that's what essays are. You're trying to work something out within the constraints of that form whether it's a question or an issue or a story. And I've been writing essays forever. Even in high school when we would be assigned essays and people would be like, ugh, gross, no, an essay. I was like, yes! Because something about that form just works for my brain. That's the right amount of words and space to ask a question and flail around trying to answer it and then come to some new discovery and wrap it up. So forever really.

ANNE: What was the trigger that made you realize, oh, wait, this is a medium that I can work in? I remember an Annie Dillard essay in high school and thinking, I didn't know you could write like this. At least not seriously. I mean, I didn't immediately become an essayist, but it just really changed the way I understood what the writing life could be, and what the reading life could be as well.

MARY LAURA: Yeah! It's a wonderful format. You know, before I was publishing essays under my own name in various places, I was working as a ghostwriter. So, I worked in corporate communications as a youthful adult and then when I had my children and I wanted to switch to

more of a freelance lifestyle, I started doing freelance writing and one of the things that sorta took off in that portion of my career was ghostwriting. So CEOs and business people, technology people would hire me to write op-eds about the things that they knew really, really deeply. But they didn't know how to write. So I would always say if you can make me understand it, I can make someone else understand it, so I really got a lot of practice in that part of my career with writing in that sort of 1200 to 1500 word short essay format or short kinda persuasive let's talk about this topic format. And that was great practice.

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ANNE: I would expect writing your own thoughts, writing your own essays to be very different, but is it really?

MARY LAURA: It is in that you can sorta remove that layer of translation. So when I'm writing as myself, which is all I do now, but I remember in the beginning when I was switching from one to the other, it was really refreshing not to have to put on someone else's voice. Because that's what, you know, a good ghostwriter will be undetectable in the writing because they completely put on their client's voice. And it was really nice to skip that step and to just write in my own voice. And so the momentum of writing as me really took off for me right at the beginning. I loved it.

ANNE: Well here's something that sounds really challenging about being the one who needs a ghostwriter. If someone else is doing the writing, then you have to do the thinking without the writing and how do they do that?

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] They do it through interviews. At least that's how it always worked with me. I would sit down and interview, you know, whoever it was. Let's say it's some technology genius, and they want to write an op-ed about something, but they're not writers. I would sit down with them for anywhere from one hour to multiple, multi-hour meetings or phone calls, and interview them. And I would ask them everything I could think to ask about whatever this topic was, and they would just talk and talk and talk. And people who are subject matter experts can talk on their subject matter. You know, if they trust me, then I can go put it into words. And usually what would happen is I would send them a draft and they'd go, this is all great except this part where you totally misunderstood this thing I said, [ANNE LAUGHS] and here's how you really say this thing about you know computers or whatever and fix it. But, yeah, sorta an interview process.

ANNE: And that's where you said forget this, I'm going to write my own book.

MARY LAURA: What I used to do at the very beginning of writing in my own voice, it kinda began with a blog that I had, that's not really out there anymore. But I would sit down and kinda blog about whatever popped into my own head before I switched into my client's voices, and it was almost like a way of burning off what was in the front of my mind, so that then I could get to

my real work. And I just found that I was just enjoying that so much more, dealing with what I was actually thinking about.

[00:11:59]

ANNE: I'm glad that has lead to places it has lead. How has it been having your real book out in the world, and you know I'm saying that with heavy, heavy air quotes.

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] The real book. It has been such a joy. I mean, I was excited about it leading up to publication, but excited in that kinda way where you're like what will this be like? I had so much kinda wonder and mystery around it, and it has been fantastic. The best, best part has been conversations with people and the things that people tell me. I didn't ... Somehow I did not expect that people would feel compelled to tell me their stories when talking about this book, but they are. I travel around, and I meet with groups of people or I speak with groups of people, and then afterwards there's a signing line and people walk up and they tell me these really, really personal things. So I feel like I've made all these wonderful personal connections and it in some ways really validates what was keeping me going writing this book, which is these are conversations we need to be having about our lives and about the need to reinvent our lives sometimes, and how hard that is to do once you get pretty far into adulthood. And all these things that people are telling me, it's all telling me that we did need this book and we do need these conversations, and that's been just absolutely delightful. I wish I could stay on book tour forever. If I could afford it, I would stay on book tour forever.

ANNE: [LAUGHS] Well speaking of book tour, you are a person who is very much in the bookstore world. What has it been like to go out and visit those actual stores? Because you spend all your time, I would imagine, in your own bookstore.

MARY LAURA: It's so fun. So, for a few years, I was the social media director for Parnassus Books, so my job for a period of years was to get on Twitter, get on Instagram, get on Facebook as the bookstore and interact with not only readers, but also other bookstores. So I felt like I had these bookstore friends all over the country. Like actual bookstores that were my friends. And so getting to go and be inside those places that I've seen the pictures of. And you know, in many cases, I know various staff members of these stores because I've met them at Winter Institute or Book Expo or various industry conferences for booksellers, so I've met some of these people. But to see them on their home turf and to see how every store really is different and every store has its own vibe and its own layout and its own personality has just been an absolute joy.

ANNE: Now we're not going to play favorites, but do tell us a few stores that it was particularly delightful to visit in person.

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] Well actually like three that pop right into my mind. Word Bookstores. They have a location in New Jersey, but they have a location in Brooklyn as well, is a spot that always been dear to my heart. I remember early on when I first started working at Parnassus

and I was looking around at other bookstores' websites just to see who has a good website. What websites look nice. I remember thinking, oh, their website is beautiful. And I've always sorta admired them from afar, so it was wonderful to get to go there and sign some books. You're not too far away from that is Books Are Magic, which is of course relatively new in the bookstore world in Brooklyn, and that was a dream to do an event there. You know, another one that almost feels like one of my own little bookstores homes is Avid in Athens, Georgia. I know Janet, who runs the store and then I know some of the booksellers there. Tyler and Will are dear friends of mine, and to get to actually be in their shop talking about the book and signing books for their customers felt like an extension of my bookstore home. But it's honestly felt like that way everywhere. It has just been so much fun.

[00:15:26]

ANNE: Did it make you see your own home turf store in a different way?

MARY LAURA: I tell you, I've taken a lot of pictures. I was just down in Thomasville, Georgia at The Bookshelf, which is of course, you know, the darling little store that is run by Annie Jones and they do a really beautiful job with their visual merchandising. Like their endcap displays, the displays at the ends of rows are really beautifully done. And I remember thinking like oh, I need to take note of how beautiful this is and come home and show it to the people who do this at Parnassus, but yeah, I've always sorta taking notes from everywhere I went.

ANNE: Well done, Annie Jones.

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] Exactly.

ANNE: I've gotten to go to all those stores really in the past year except for Word in Brooklyn and now I'm disappointed. I was in Brooklyn and didn't make it. Next time.

MARY LAURA: It's really cute. It's tiny, but they work miracles with that space. There are so many books crammed in there, and they have just brilliant staff, so definitely worth a visit.

ANNE: Mary Laura, what do you do at Parnassus in your professional role? Not your oh, I did write that, I'll sign it for you role.

MARY LAURA: Well it's changing actually right now. So for the first two or three years, almost four years, I was the social media director which if you interacted with our store online, that was actually me. And then I also ran our digital magazine which is called Musing, which I founded when I first started working there. I ran that for five years, and over the past few months, we have actually been trying to figure out what my role there is going to look like because I had to take a little book leave to go on book tour and obviously we had to keep things going while I was gone, and we had some other staff take over the things that I have been doing, and it has worked really well. I've also continued to book more travel and more speaking stuff into the next year. You know, my editor would like me to write some more, so I'm trying to carve out some

writing time, so we're kinda moving things around at the moment, but I think, I think, my current title is Book Enthusiast At Large, which means [ANNE LAUGHS] it's just a wonderfully fuzzy term that means I'm continuing to read like crazy, recommend books. I still contribute to Musing, the online magazine, so you'll see me there picking staff picks every month and writing things, doing interviews with authors and that sorta stuff. And I'll still be around doing you know, the in conversation events that happen on our stage. So I'm still there, I'm just not there as much. So if you just walk into the store on a random Thursday, you are not likely to see me standing right there at the front, but I'm somewhere in the atmosphere and I've probably been there somewhat recently.

[00:17:49]

ANNE: Now here on What Should I Read Next, our mission is to put the right books in the hands or the ears of the right reader.

MARY LAURA: I love that.

ANNE: What have you learned about doing just that from your time at Parnassus?

MARY LAURA: You have to listen to what the person tells you about what they love and where they are in their lives at that moment. There's a natural tendency I think we all have to get everyone to love the same things that we love. Whether that's books or any, food, restaurants, whatever else, but often people are a mixed bag and often somebody will come in and either what they need or what they like is just very different from what I need or what I like. And so, as a bookseller, you have to be ready to recommend things that might be a little outside your wheelhouse. Or to introduce that person to another bookseller, who has a different specialty and can recommend different things. But the first thing I always ask is, well what have you read and loved lately? And I let them tell me what has really lit them up lately, and then we kinda go from there. And I'll add, that doesn't mean that I necessarily want to find them a read-alike to what they have just read and loved. I do like to help people broaden their horizons and discover new things, but that gives us a place to start. If I can start with what I know you like, then I can ask you some questions about what else you might like.

ANNE: I'm glad you said that. I'm not wild about the term read-alike for exactly that reason because for good books, the reading experience should be unique. It shouldn't be like any other.

MARY LAURA: Yeah.

ANNE: Although I do, I do understand why that is a useful term. You've advocated for the idea that no single book can be all things to all readers. I'd love to hear you expand on that.

MARY LAURA: Oh, yeah. It's something I thought about a lot just in the past season as an author. When I think about the fact that this book I wrote is out in the world and people are reading it and it's one woman's perspective obviously. It's a memoir that is written in essays, so

it's one person's life. It's one person's thoughts. I hope that people are reading it as part of a multifaceted reading life, you know? I hope no one reads it and goes, that book only had this, and it didn't have all these other things that I love in other books. You know, I like to recommend books in stacks. You know, I like to say, if you're looking for books on this theme or you're in this phase of life or you like to read this kind of thing, here are six different books that get in that in different ways. So I hope my book is a part of kinda a reading symphony in somebody's life. I hope that's how people read in general. Like I hope you read one book and you love it, and so you go reach for something a little bit different and that takes you something a little even different. I think that's how we broaden our horizons.

[00:20:30]

ANNE: Yes. Absolutely. So on my blog Modern Mrs Darcy, a term I've been using for a long, long time is from the wine world. You're talking about music, so I'm going to talk about wine, not like I'm actually qualified to speak about wine. [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] But I can talk about books, and I do know there is such a thing about a wine flight.

MARY LAURA: Yes!

ANNE: You deliberately pair wines that have some characteristics in common, but different in important ways because by comparing and contrasting, you elevate the experience of each individual one. But they also talk to each other and make you notice things about the companions that you wouldn't otherwise.

MARY LAURA: Yes!

ANNE: And that's what I love about having a, to mix our metaphors, a symphony of books as well is you notice things when you read together that you wouldn't in isolation.

MARY LAURA: Yes.

ANNE: Books are better together.

MARY LAURA: They are, and I love what you say about they talk to each other. That ... I say that all the time. If you read constantly and you're always reading, then the books that you read recently are all in conversation up in your brain, and it becomes this whole different thought experience than just reading one.

ANNE: It's funny. You might think that if you group books together that it would depress the impact that they have on you, but it's exactly the opposite.

MARY LAURA: Yeah, no, they complement each other. I think the wine metaphor is good. I don't know much about wine either other than that I buy it in bulk and I like it, [ANNE LAUGHS] but fancy restaurants are always saying this is the one that goes best with that meal that you

just ordered because the flavors here will bring out the flavors in that rice or whatever. So I get that.

[00:21:57]

ANNE: Have you seen people pair your book *I'll Miss You When I Blink* with books that have made you go, well that's an interesting pairing.

MARY LAURA: I just saw the other day and I wish I could credit who this was, and I'm so sorry that I don't know. Whoever you are, if you're listening, I read your blog. You are a young woman and you're married to a guy and you're both English teachers.

ANNE: And come self report in show notes because we want to hear. [BOTH LAUGH]

MARY LAURA: Yes.

ANNE: And we wanna link that.

MARY LAURA: Whoever you are, someone sent me a link and it went to another link, and I fell down this rabbit hole, and somehow I landed at your blog, which is unusual for me because I'm trying not to read reviews. I'm trying to sorta stay away from reading about my own book, but somehow this fell right in front of my face, and she paired *I Miss You When I Blink* with *Under The Tuscan Sun*, and she said these are both books-

ANNE: Ooh.

MARY LAURA: Yeah. She said these are both books about reinventing your life in some way and taking stock of where you have gotten as an adult, and what you love about your life and what you don't love and what you have to do to make a difference so that you're living out the rest of your days in a way that is more satisfying. And it was truly the way she wrote about it was a lovely pairing, and whoever you are, English teacher, you did a great job and thank you for that pairing.

ANNE: Oh, that's so fun. I've seen your book appear, well first of all, I have to tell you that I already jotted down one flight pick for your book [MARY LAURA GASPS] in the course of our conversation that occurred to me earlier.

MARY LAURA: Yay.

ANNE: We might circle back to that.

MARY LAURA: Okay.

ANNE: But you put together a really excellent list for lithub back in the winter about memoirs of everyday lives.

[00:23:25]

MARY LAURA: Oh, yeah. I wrote that last year. They were so nice to publish that. I'm really glad they did because that's a topic that's been burning in my mind for awhile.

ANNE: So I really admire any other who can make ... This most often comes up in fiction, but an author who can turn a regular Tuesday night conversation into high drama, high stakes, change your life kind of stuff.

MARY LAURA: Yeah.

ANNE: You talked about how it's great to read a truth is stranger fiction memoir, but there's really a place for these books that are stories of people who don't have jaw-dropping stories or remarkable lives.

MARY LAURA: I should be fair and I say I love all sorts of memoirs. I'm a huge memoir reader and I love the larger than life stories. Like the ones where someone has escaped a kidnapper's lair, so they become a famous rock and roll star. I love big, larger than life high stakes memoirs, but I also love these memoirs about the things that we all go through, the much more common experiences because if you think about it, the stakes are high for all of us in these regular things. Friendship. Marriage. Illness. Parenthood. All the things that we, that so many of us go through, those stakes are high and if a good writer can write about those things in a way that makes you feel how high those stakes are and makes you look at your own life a little bit differently.

ANNE: Do you have a few favorites?

MARY LAURA: That article is a good start. The one that I lead with in that article was one that came out last year by Meaghan O'Connell with *And Now We Have Everything* and it's about the year that she got pregnant and had her first child. And when it was pitched to me, and I don't even remember who pitched me. Must have been in some book sales meeting where someone was like this is a highly anticipated new memoir. It's about a woman getting pregnant and having a baby and I immediately assumed there must be some wild and crazy larger than life element, like you know, was she in college and she got accidentally pregnant? She had to decide what to do or did she get pregnant, and then her husband killed a bunch of people and went to jail? You know, what's the big twist? And there isn't a big twist. She was engaged, about to get married to this great guy. They just got pregnant a little earlier than they meant to and she had to wrap her mind around this big change happening in her life. This big permanent change, and she just writes with such candid but really intelligent humor and introspection and she asks these great questions, and I came away from it ... You know, I'm many years past having babies. My kids

are teenagers now, but it made me look back on that time of my life differently. It made me look at my life now differently. Just a great example to kinda jump off from in making that list.

[00:26:05]

ANNE: When I saw what your loves and [LAUGHS] and your broad, not love category, we'll get to that. [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] When I saw what those were, I started thinking about the books you might enjoy reading with the qualifications you gave. My brain got to thinking about that and then I scanned this list of your ordinary memoirs, and so many of those titles were on there.

MARY LAURA: Oh, good!

ANNE: I'm excited to jump in and hear about what you enjoy reading, Mary Laura. Are you ready to go there?

MARY LAURA: Let's go.

ANNE: Okay. Let's go.

ANNE: Readers, I'm a bit of a nervous traveler as some of you know, but I'm getting much better at it. And honestly one of the ways I've gotten better is by having the right gear. My Away suitcase has become one of my travel essentials.

It may sound silly that a suitcase makes me feel more comfortable when I fly, but it totally does. It's sturdy and easy to maneuver, so I don't worry about managing my stuff in the terminal. I can easily access the things I need to pull out at security because the zipper is smartly placed. And because one side zips completely closed so I know nothing is going to fall out. And of course I don't have that nervous look of someone searching for an outlet because my Away bag comes with a built in battery charger. I pop it out of my suitcase and into my purse just before boarding, so I know I'll always have the battery life to support listening to podcasts—or watching the latest literary adaptation on Netflix—for the entire flight, even if it's a long one.

If you want to travel easier, check out the full line of Away sizes and colors. You can test out those four 360 degree spinner wheels, the patent-pending compression system, and the lightweight, impact resistant premium German polycarbonate in person at any of their stores in New York, Austin, LA, San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, and London.

Away offers free shipping on any order within the lower 48 states, gives you a 100-Day trial to let you try any Away product on the road, and then backs up your purchase with a lifetime warranty.

Give Away a try the next time you go away.

For \$20 off a suitcase, visit awaytravel.com/READNEXT20 and use promo code READNEXT20 during checkout!

That's awaytravel.com/READNEXT20 with the code READNEXT20 for \$20 off your suitcase.

ANNE: You know how this works. You are going to tell me three books you love, one book you don't, and what you're reading now and then I suppose we can try to find some books that the bookseller hasn't read for her to read next.

[00:28:31]

MARY LAURA: I can't wait. So excited. As I've told you before, as I woke up this morning as if it were Christmas. I was like, today is the day. Anne's going to tell me what I should read! So what do we start with?

ANNE: First of all, was it hard to choose your favorites? I was really impressed that you said my all-time favorite novel. My all-time favorite memoir. Do you always have answers at the ready?

MARY LAURA: You know, lately I do because I've been asked this question a lot. People are always like, tell me one thing! If we tweak the question in anyway, like if you say favorite novel about this or favorite memoir from this type of person or this type of life, I can give you different examples for all sorts of specific questions and I should probably say that the ones we're going to talk about is my all-time favorites. If they were suddenly eradicated from this world for some reason, there's another all-time favorite I'm sure waiting in the wings to pop in. [BOTH LAUGH] But I try to narrow it down.

ANNE: It sounds like a dystopian novel waiting to happen. Actually this is seeming pretty appropriate if you stick with your favorite novel of all-time that you submitted.

MARY LAURA: Aw. I love to talk about it. It's *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro. I think it's the greatest novel ever written. I mean, I read it right when it first came out years ago. I probably think about it daily. I thought about it, I swear, the other day when I went to go see Toy Story 4 with one of my kids and I'm not going to spoil anything about the movie, but things happen to the toys, it made me think about this dystopian novel.

I love a couple of things about it. Number one, I'm a sucker for a boarding school novel. So any novel set in boarding school, I'm in, and that's kinda what I thought that book was. It's what you think is going on in the book when it first starts, you think it's just a regular boarding school. You come to find out other things are happening. But I also love that what these people were doing,

these young adults and the adults are their lives are doing was trying to prove the worth of their souls and trying to prove that they even had souls. And one of the things that they do is try to prove that creating art proves that you have a soul. I feel that if you look at any great book or any great artistic endeavor or any big change that people go through in their lives, part of what they are trying to do is prove that they deserve to be here. I love this book. I could talk about it for hours.

[00:30:43]

ANNE: I love the way you described it.

MARY LAURA: It's also one of the very few of my favorite books that actually got made into a movie that is just about as good as the book.

ANNE: I haven't seen the movie.

MARY LAURA: [GASPS] Oh, it's good. I mean it's very true to the book. If you like the mood of the book and you remember the plot of this book, it's very faithful to it.

ANNE: Okay. I mean, I remember being excited when I saw Carey Mulligan who was one of the younger Bennett sisters in the Keira Knightley *Pride & Prejudice*, I was like oh, I like her and I like that book. [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] And I'm totally going to watch that. And I ... Here we are.

MARY LAURA: Well, watch it and get ready to cry. Don't wear mascara.

ANNE: Mary Laura, you did choose for yourself memoir as one of your categories. Was it a contest to identify your favorite memoir of all time?

MARY LAURA: It would be impossible for me to pick one favorite memoir of all the memoirs in the world. I can't do it. But I can pick one of my favorites and say it gets to represent the rest of the favorites. And that is *The Year of Magical Thinking*. It's perfect in so many ways. Partially because it's Joan Didion and her writing is so crystal clear and efficient. But also it's - it is so of a specific moment in her life. You know, she wrote it about that year after her husband died, and it starts with his death and just kinda ... She writes through what she was living emotionally and situationally and you feel like you're right there. That is another one of the few books that I reread.

ANNE: Mary Laura, what did you choose to round out your favorites list?

MARY LAURA: Okay, so for my third I went in a totally different direction from the first two. A book that makes me laugh. I mean, it consistently makes me laugh. It doesn't matter how many times I've read it. It doesn't matter what page I open it to, and that is *Hyperbole And A Half* by Allie Brosh.

ANNE: Oh, it's good to have a book like that.

[00:32:37]

MARY LAURA: And I'll tell you one of the most delightful experiences of my life was when each of my children got to the age where I felt like they could read that book. You know, since they were little when it first came out. It's been out for a few years, and now they're teenagers. But when each of them got to the age where I was like, your mother has something special to give you and it is my copy of *Hyperbole And A Half*. [LAUGHS]

ANNE: Aww.

MARY LAURA: Hearing them laugh as hard as I laughed, that was really something. It's one of the funniest books in the entire world and the drawings that go along with Allie's words. You know, her strange little computerized cartoons are just so evocative and they just get you, right in the heart.

ANNE: See, I checked my copy out of the library and this is making me really sad I can't just go grab it off the shelf. 'Cause that's what happens when you talk about good books, right?

MARY LAURA: Yeah. I really do return to it. So all three of these favorites that I have mentioned, even though I'm not a rereader, these are three of the very, very few that I will revisit.

ANNE: Mary Laura, what books have not been for you?

MARY LAURA: I am currently in the process of sorta self-analysis on this subject 'cause I know ... I don't know if it means something is wrong with me. I don't know what it means, but a lot of things that fall into the category of classics particularly. And I'm so ashamed to say this out loud, particularly, children's classics. I just didn't love and I don't know if I was the wrong age when I read them. And don't hang up on me when I saw this [ANNE LAUGHS] 'cause this is ... You're going to gasp. *Little Women*. I felt nothing when I read it. I don't know if I'm like a broken person inside or I read it when I was too little. Maybe you're supposed to read it when you're 11 and I read it when I was 8 and that was too early. I remember being frustrated. I wanted it to move along. I wanted more things to happen. It frustrated me and it kinda bored me. Is that terrible? Am I monster?

ANNE: First of all, when it comes to uncertainties about the reading life, it is never, ever just you.

MARY LAURA: Okay.

ANNE: It's not just you. Look, it's really freaking long and Louisa May Alcott didn't like it either.
[MARY LAURA LAUGHS] So-

MARY LAURA: That makes me feel better.

ANNE: I think you're in better company than you realize.

[00:34:44]

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] I remember reading that, that she didn't like it either. The current theory I'm running with is, I read a lot of classic children's literature too young and therefore, I didn't have the attention span for it.

ANNE: Yes, nodding so hard. And it seems to me, I - we've touched on this briefly on the podcast before. I see a lot of schools at least in my region promoting, we take literature seriously, and we read the classics so young. And you know, you used to read Jane Austen as a junior in high school, well we're going to do it in seventh grade. And I do not think that does anybody any favors.

MARY LAURA: I don't either. I think it turns people off. I think if they can't connect with it because they're not the right age to be reading it, see what happens is they turn out like me, and they grow up and they get on a podcast and then they have to admit to not loving something that [LAUGHS] that everyone else loves and they feel shame. Don't do this, teachers.

ANNE: And don't feel shame about the reading life.

MARY LAURA: Yeah. Well-

ANNE: Here, we can go all Brene Brown and say, like, well there can be guilt that's going to motivate you to cross it off your list [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] but shame, no.

MARY LAURA: No shame.

ANNE: Although when you were like, Anne, this is really bad, really bad, this is really bad. I thought you were going to start like dissing Jane Austen, which I would be okay with, by the way. We could have that conversation.

MARY LAURA: I like Jane Austen. And I ... You know, it's not like I don't like any classics. I love Edith Wharton. Everything Edith Wharton wrote, I was into it, and those are classics.

ANNE: And they're way more similar to *Never Let Me Go* than *Heidi*.

MARY LAURA: Yeah. Seriously. I shouldn't diss a whole category, but often like if someone says oh, I'm so excited. My book club is going to read all classics this year, I would just feel myself going "eugh."

ANNE: I think we're getting to the point where we can call *The Year of Magical Thinking* a classic, so it's all relative.

[00:36:26]

MARY LAURA: And *Never Let Me Go* is obviously if not a classic already, would be one.

ANNE: We're going to call that a modern classic for right now. But yes. It's destined for greatness.

MARY LAURA: If the author wins the Nobel Prize, his novel gets to be a classic.

ANNE: Okay, I see what you're saying, but have you scanned the list of Pulitzer winners and been like, wait, what, who?

MARY LAURA: Sometimes, yes. I do have that feeling.

ANNE: So you will live forever on those lists, but maybe not so much in reader's hearts.

MARY LAURA: Right.

ANNE: Just 'cause you won an award. Mm-hmm.

MARY LAURA: Right. That happens. It's funny how awards go. Like some years, I feel like the lists come out and I go, yeah! Those are all my favorite books from this year! And then some years the lists come out, and I'm like, what? [ANNE LAUGHS] And then you're like, well, maybe it was a good book, but that doesn't sound interesting. I'm not going to do it.

ANNE: The Guardian has their annual not Booker thing going right now [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] which I love and think is really fun.

MARY LAURA: Yeah.

ANNE: But classics have been a little bit fraught for you. But you're clearly not one of those people who walk in the bookstore, 'cause I know this happens and says, yeah, I just don't like old books by which they mean anything published more than 7 years ago. No, it's not that. I love a lot of literary fiction, right? But there is so much literary fiction that I may not even finish because it's just either not good. It's not going to stand the test of time or it's not to my taste.

MARY LAURA: Yeah.

ANNE: But that doesn't mean that like, I'm lost because I'll never enjoy literary fiction. And I suspect that it's the same way with you for the classics.

MARY LAURA: I think maybe something ... That a repercussion of that having been kinda turned off to the classics very early, and so many of those classics were old, so they're set a long time ago. I grew up thinking that I didn't like historical fiction, and I think that's wrong. Because when push comes to shove and someone really makes me read a great historical novel, I love it. I think I lost years of my reading life not reading any historical fiction because I thought, you know, I will not be able to stand a book that includes a butter churning scene when you know, really, I was just reading all that stuff too young.

[00:38:29]

ANNE: Mm-hmm. There's an analogy I really loved from one of my college, I think, textbooks. They were talking about something else entirely, but the point was they were saying that we expose young people to this information that matters greatly in their lives and we do it early and we do it often and we do it because we think we're building them into people who will become responsible, full-fledged, admirable adults. But what we really do is inoculate them against the very things that we want them to have.

MARY LAURA: Yeah.

ANNE: We're not actually supporting them. We're not teaching them the important things. We're preventing them from understanding the importance of the things that we're teaching them way before they're ready for them. And I feel like you've been inoculated.

MARY LAURA: I fully get that. That's well said.

ANNE: I'm really sorry though.

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] I've toyed with the idea of, like, doing an experiment and making myself go back and read some of the classics that I think I hate because I read them too early, but I don't want to.

ANNE: [LAUGHS] But then the thought of *Little Women*...

MARY LAURA: Yeah, I think I might be at an age right now where I don't want to do something, I don't make myself do it. I'm not going to do it.

ANNE: It might make you feel better to know that in episode 164, Chelsey hated *Little Women*. [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] And she thought she would get rotten tomatoes thrown at her, but the show notes are full of comments that say finally! Somebody said it. Me, too.

MARY LAURA: Well, I'm glad that I can also speak for that population. [BOTH LAUGH] People who did not fully connect with *Little Women*. That's great.

ANNE: I could make a confession about how *Heidi* made me roll my eyes a lot, which I didn't read that until I was an adult. This is a little bit much for me. Is it because I'm in my 30s?

MARY LAURA: Maybe. There's something for everyone.

[00:40:10]

ANNE: You know, I will say this though. My copies of both *Heidi* and *Little Women* are really pretty and look good on my bookshelves. [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] And they have actually been read.

MARY LAURA: There you go. They serve some purpose.

ANNE: They do. Mary Laura, what are you reading right now?

MARY LAURA: So I just recently finished reading Jami Attenberg's upcoming novel *All This Could Be Yours*.

ANNE: [GASPS] I didn't know she had a new one coming out!

MARY LAURA: She does. I think it's October. It might be September, but I think it's October.

ANNE: And how is it?

MARY LAURA: I really enjoyed it. It's about a family. It's one of those books where you feel like you're eavesdropping on a family, and all their issues. And all the adult children and all the parents and you're starting to uncover kinda ... Okay, why did that brother turn out so messed up. Oh, because this thing happened in the past. It reminded me just a little bit of a show that my husband and I have been watching on HBO called *Succession*. Have you've seen that show yet?

ANNE: No.

MARY LAURA: Okay, it is complete soap opera trash [LAUGHS] but it is so fun because it's this dysfunctional adult siblings and then their parents, and as you watch the show, you come to figure out how everybody got so messed up. It's that kind of a novel. I really enjoyed it. I think it's going to be a crowd pleaser.

ANNE: Now, I like her work. I admire what she does. Her last one made me deeply uncomfortable and I couldn't finish it.

MARY LAURA: You're not the only person I've heard that from.

ANNE: So I'm seeking reassurance really.

MARY LAURA: No, I did read it, and I actually ... It was called *All Grown Up*, and I actually did like it. It was a great example for me of where people always talk about well is the protagonist likeable? She's sorta unlikable and I love the novel for that. But I remember reading it and going, this is not going to be everybody's cup of tea. So that's okay. Something for everyone.

[00:41:50]

ANNE: What are you looking for in your reading life right now?

MARY LAURA: I feel like what I am always looking for is that sweet spot where good literary writing overlaps with a juicy story, whether fiction or nonfiction that holds my attention. I don't want to be bored. But I don't want to sacrifice great writing in the interest of being entertained. So I'm always, always looking for that place on the venn diagram where there's that overlap.

ANNE: I am right there with you. And many readers are looking for the same thing. Great writing, great plot, not one at the expense of the other.

MARY LAURA: Mm-hmm.

ANNE: Readers, did you know most brands recommend you trade in your old bra every 6 months? I can assure you I've pushed that number in the past, to my own detriment, but with ThirdLove we have no excuses.

Their online Fit Finder quiz eliminates the trip to the store and those awkward fitting room experiences. In just 60 seconds ThirdLove helps you identify your size and shape, then shows you styles that fit your body. And stylists say when you get your foundation garments right, everything you put on your body just looks better.

ThirdLove is going to be the most comfortable bra you've worn—not only because you chose the right fit, but also because they use ultra-soft smoothing fabrics and lightweight, super-thin memory foam cups. All those details really do make these the most comfortable.

And I can tell you these ARE the most comfortable bras. I've been wearing ThirdLove for a couple of years now and as I moved past 6 months on my other bras I replaced them all with ThirdLove. I might feel kind of weird telling you this, except that on book tour readers frequently thanked me in person for introducing them to Third Love, so clearly we're all friends here.

But there's no need to take my word for it because ThirdLove offers a 100% Fit Guarantee and if you don't love it for any reason you can return or exchange it for free.

ThirdLove knows there's a perfect bra for everyone, so right now they are offering What Should I Read Next listeners 15% off your first order!

Go to THIRDLOVE.com/READNEXT now to find your perfect-fitting bra... and get 15% off your first purchase!

That's THIRDLOVE.com/READNEXT for 15% off today!

ANNE: So I have in mind not to load you up with some of the great titles I've read that are coming out in the coming months, even though I would love to hear your suggestions. [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] But with great books that have been out a few years.

[00:44:13]

MARY LAURA: Okay.

ANNE: That aren't necessarily on your to-be-read stack and won't be unless you deliberately choose them and put them there.

MARY LAURA: Ooh, okay.

ANNE: First I want to go back and share the books that I was thinking of earlier when you were talking about ghostwriting, and I just finished a book where the protagonist and narrator developed her writing skills ghostwriting.

MARY LAURA: Oh!

ANNE: Great stories about say like gas and electric employees, and her best work was included in the utilities bills in the mailers, and so when she had to put together her portfolio, she was like, well, you know, it's kinda hard to send out those little heartwarming snippets about the gas and electric employees like saving lives in alleys when they stumble upon kittens that need resuscitation and what not. Another reason I want to mention this book is I was on book tour myself last fall and booksellers love this author.

MARY LAURA: What is it?

ANNE I just want to put this out there. It's *The View from Penthouse B* by Elinor Lipman.

MARY LAURA: [GASPS] I have not read it.

ANNE: But do you know her? Have you read her?

MARY LAURA: Well yeah, I know her, but I haven't read that book. It's interesting. I am aware that that-

ANNE: Wait, hold on, hold on. And the protagonist's name? Is Gwen-Laura, what is that.

[00:45:28]

MARY LAURA: Are you serious?

ANNE: I'm very serious.

MARY LAURA: Oh, my gosh. Okay, wait. I'm writing it down. *The View From Penthouse B?*

ANNE: Yes. So I've been working my way through her back catalog.

MARY LAURA: Okay.

ANNE: The last one I read by Elinor Lipman was pressed into my hands by a bookseller at Rakestraw Books in California, but this one it came out in 2013, so it's not old, but it is definitely not brand spanking new, new release table stuff.

MARY LAURA: That makes me so happy. I can't wait.

ANNE: Gwen-Laura moves in with her sister in Penthouse B on 10th street in Greenwich Village after her husband dies. So she's a widow. Her sister is newly divorced. Her husband was involved in scandal that he brought wholly upon himself that they make jokes about the whole novel. [MARY LAURA LAUGHS] With her half of the divorce settlement, she brought a Penthouse and she invested in the rest in Bernie Madoff.

MARY LAURA: Uh oh.

ANNE: And it is, you know, gone, baby, gone. So there's jokes about that the whole novel. So they move in together to put their lives back together again. A theme you like in your books, although this is definitely like eyebrow, way high, tongue in cheek. You know, this is the snarky take on that.

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] That sounds fun.

ANNE: They're figuring things out again. Trying to cobble together new, very different lives for themselves and something I like about Elinor Lipman that you see consistently in her work is she does the found family like the group of used to be strangers who come together and make this like really tight family functioning, loving unit. Oh, she does it so well.

MARY LAURA: Oh, that makes me very happy. I can't wait.

ANNE: Excellent. Have you read Ann Leary? Specifically *The Good House*?

MARY LAURA: No.

[00:47:06]

ANNE: Oh, that makes me really happy. [SINGS]

MARY LAURA: And I don't think I know much about *The Good House*.

ANNE: Well I will tell you. It's so good. This was amazing on audio, too, if you're an audiobook person.

MARY LAURA: Ooh, okay.

ANNE: At the heart of the story is a woman in small-town, Massachusetts. She's lived there her whole life. Her ancestors lived there. Her name is Hildy Good. She's divorced fairly recently. She's a realtor. Her life's not going so well at the moment since this divorce, and she drinks. People around her think she kinda drinks a lot, but she doesn't think she has a problem. It's a quiet drama, but it doesn't mean nothing happens.

MARY LAURA: Okay.

ANNE: It means it's one of those books about just regular people living lives in a neighborhood, nothing to write home about, except it is because the way Leary builds the suspense and shows you the relationships and raises the stakes and makes you feel like why, what's happening really, really matters.

MARY LAURA: Ooh.

ANNE: So as this quiet drama unfolds around you, you're seeing it through the eyes of someone who is not trustworthy. [MARY LAURA GASPS] So what you have is an unreliable narrator where it's not a gimmick or a plot device that you see so often in domestic suspense somedays like ooh, sometimes I lie and you'll never know. Like she's telling you the story as she sees it the best way she can.

MARY LAURA: Ohh.

ANNE: it really works.

MARY LAURA: When did this book come out? Do you remember?

ANNE: 2013.

MARY LAURA: Okay.

[00:48:29]

ANNE: So we're going on seven years out in the world. Hildy helps a new client move to town. She's high end. She's loaded. She rides horses. She has some trouble fitting in, but she starts hanging out with a local guy which is fine until it's not.

MARY LAURA: Uh oh.

ANNE: And Hildy begins to know things she shouldn't and take an interest in things where her nose doesn't belong and then if she's under the influence, well things might happen that she wouldn't have done in better moments but trouble ensues in a small New England town. Oh, she does such a good job at setting up the situation that looks straight forward. Oh, wait, maybe this is a little ominous. Oh, wait, hold on, this is getting, I just need to sit in the driveway listening to what happens next because I'm worried about these people and what's going to happen next.

MARY LAURA: [LAUGHS] Oh, yay.

ANNE: It's a great book. Leary is a literary writer who can write a completely absorbing intricate, well executed plot.

MARY LAURA: Oh, I'm so excited. Thank you. I have some more travel coming up over the next season, and it's nice to be able to take a paperback on a plane. It doesn't take up as much room and it's not as heavy. So now I have a couple of good paperbacks to grab.

ANNE: Well it's only 300 pages, but it feels like you cover a lot of ground in that time. And I like a book like that, that feels like you went a long way.

MARY LAURA: I do too. Especially when I travel because it can distract me from the fact that I'm, you know, sitting through plane delays or whatever else is eating up my time. Just something big and immersive like that is great.

ANNE: Have you read much by Alain de Botton?

MARY LAURA: No.

ANNE: In my opinion, he wrote what is a really great novel in 2016 called *The Course of Love*.

MARY LAURA: No, I completely missed it.

ANNE: That is music to my ears, Mary Laura. Okay, so he's a philosopher.

MARY LAURA: Yes, I've read - I've read articles and blog posts and things like that from him.

ANNE: *How Proust Can Change Your Life?*

[00:50:18]

MARY LAURA: Right.

ANNE: So this is my unexpected find of 2016, and I'm happy to be reviving it three years later. This is on purpose the story of a completely ordinary couple. I can't believe that I didn't think of this sooner because this is totally the fictional slash philosophical counterpart to your every day memoirs.

MARY LAURA: Okay.

ANNE: Completely ordinary couple which could of course be dead boring, right?

MARY LAURA: Right.

ANNE: Or disastrous. But what he does is he shows this couple, and a very specific couple, not - not like a hypothetical couple, but he introduces you to these characters and you watch them meet, you know, it's not a cute way. But it's a normal way. But not too interesting or bizarre because then it would not accomplish his purpose. You watch them meet, you watch them begin to get to know each other. You watch them fall in love and you watch them do things like have it out over the Ikea plates because this is what couples do, and he's trying to make a point about what love is and what our responsibilities are which sounds dead boring, but it's not through his eyes because he showing you real people. Real fictional people. You know what I mean.

MARY LAURA: Yeah. Yeah.

ANNE: Real emotions and what they do and don't do that possibly ruins their lives. He makes some really interesting choices in these characters' relationships that would be amazing to discuss at book club. You'd have an incredible discussion.

MARY LAURA: Ooh.

ANNE: Something that some readers loved and some readers don't is that he tells his story, the fiction, and then he zooms out and he's like, let's consider what's happening here and why it matters. And his philosophy self kicks in.

MARY LAURA: Ahh.

ANNE: Some readers are like take me back to the story already, but some readers were like, oh my gosh, that made it so perfect and cause me to see not only the characters, but my own life in a meaningful way and I'm so glad he did it that way. So you can read it and be the judge, but I think the theme he's addressing. Really it's like a completely different take about a lot of what you talk about in your memoir. Not that authors only want to read the kind of stuff that they write about because it's a symphony and you want to get the whole section, but he does it in such a different way while doing things that we know you like. Like making the everyday seem noteworthy.

[00:52:26]

MARY LAURA: Yeah.

ANNE: I like this for you. *The Course of Love*.

MARY LAURA: Oh, I'm excited. It sounds really relatable and like something I would jump right into.

ANNE: I hope so. Okay, so Mary Laura, of the books we talked about, *The View From Penthouse B* by Elinor Lippman, *The Good House* by Ann Leary, and *The Course of Love* by Alain de Botton, what do you think you'll read next?

MARY LAURA: I mean, I want to read all three. I think - I think I'm leaning toward *The Good House*. I think that's the first one I will grab to throw in my plane bag.

ANNE: I love the sound of that. I can't wait to hear what you think.

MARY LAURA: Thank you.

ANNE: Thanks so much for talking books with me today.

MARY LAURA: Thank you for having me. This was a blast.

[CHEERFUL OUTRO MUSIC]

ANNE: Hey readers, I hope you enjoyed my discussion with Mary Laura, and I'd love to hear what YOU think she should read next. I'd also love it if you knew what blog post Mary Laura mentioned that she couldn't remember where she found it. Tell us in the comments at whatshouldireadnextpodcast.com/195. That is also where you'll find the full list of titles we talked about today.

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